



Town of Fairfield
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

A meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, February 27, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. in the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities, 100 Mona Terrace.

PRESENT: Linda DeLorenzo-Secretary, Carolyn Durgy, Laura Incerto-Vice Chair, Loretta Jay, Bernard Lynch-Chairman, George Markley, Nhi Tran

ABSENT: Rabbi Barbara Paris, Suzanne Testani

ALSO PRESENT: Julie DeMarco-Director of Human and Social Services, Urb Leimkuhler - Fairfield of Senior Advocates, Amy O'Donnell-Director of Senior Center, Margot Schiff - Friends of the Bigelow Senior Center

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernard Lynch at 4:04 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Bernard Lynch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of January 23, 2020, Meeting Minutes

Linda DeLorenzo motioned to approve the minutes. Laura Incerto seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 7-0.

2. Old Business

a) Board of Health

Ms. Durgy reported nothing of concern. She said the Coronavirus is not in the State.

b) Committee for People with Disabilities

Ms. Jay said the Committee is in need of a secretary. She said they are continuing to work on a community stakeholder's breakfast to be held April 23 at 8:00 a.m. They are expanding to make sure they include all stakeholders in the community. The Agenda is geared to providers and begins with attendees networking then participating in a round table discussion. The focus is to reflect upon the past two years and give people time to interact. The shared document will capture what do we want this Committee to be and how can we achieve this. Ms. DeMarco hasn't heard back from the Town Attorney yet on forming a Commission.

c) Friends of the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities

Ms. Schiff announced today is Giving Day and appreciates any kind of donation. She listed numerous activities Friends provide such as music and dancers for the St. Patrick's Celebration on March 16, the Speaker Series beginning in spring for \$5 includes a light supper. They have supplied new awnings and stage curtains in the cafeteria and sponsored the Veteran's breakfast and holiday raffle. She said they are looking for new board members. If you know anyone who would like to participate please leave their name with Ms. DeMarco. They are a busy group, any age group is welcome and they meeting the 4th Wednesday of the month at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Lynch read a letter from Friends of the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities to the Human Services Commission thanking them for the generous donation to their Holiday Basket Raffle.

3. Department Update

a) Staffing

Amy O'Donnell began as the part-time Senior Center Director and will act as liaison with outside groups. Ms. O'Donnell gave a brief background.

b) Bigelow Center

- Elected Officials Open House and Tour is March 19 at the Center from 4:00-5:00 p.m.
- The March 19 Committee with People with Disabilities meeting is cancelled and will be rescheduled.
- Human Services Commission meeting is March 26.
- Comedy Night is March 26 at Penfield Pavilion from 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- The Father Coleman Fund will provide a warming fund for 10 or more families who have exhausted their operations fuel benefit.
- Sacred Heart University is doing a needs assessment for gaps in services for veterans.
- Census Day will be held April 6.

b) Social Services

Ms. DeMarco attended a Town meeting on the Coronavirus. She said the Town has developed a Continuity Plan on how essential services are carried out. They were informed of the status of the virus, how the Town will function if effected and non-pharmaceutical interventions. A discussion was had on how to get the information to seniors. The Committee will review the Department's plan once it is complete. This will be an ongoing Agenda item.

Ms. Jay shared the Newport Academy Proposal, a group homes for young adults. She gave background on the proposed opening and the Public Hearing at Fairfield University.

4. Public Comment - Mr. Leimkuhler said one of the challenges we have in the town is finding housing for seniors. He said the trend is "not in my neighborhood". We as a town have to deal with the issue and find a way to come together. He thanked the Committee for their support and for attending the Senior Advocates meetings. He mentioned several important upcoming Town meetings relating to senior issues, housing and budget.

The Committee discussed the Town Alert system and will ask Fire Chief McCarthy to present.

5. Adjourn - George Markley motioned to adjourn at 4:48 p.m. Laura Incerto seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila Tesei, Recording Secretary

**The next Commission meeting will be on March 26, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.
Minutes are subject to review, correction and approval by Human Services Commission.**